

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 00020 050901Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGRE-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00
XMB-04 OPIC-06 SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05
SS-15 STR-05 CEA-01 PA-02 PRS-01 /096 W
-----073054 050924Z /10

R 050746Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4697

UNCLAS RANGOON 0020

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, BM

SUBJ: UNSEASONAL RAIN MAY REDUCE RICE PADDY HARVEST

1. UNSEASONAL RAIN IN LATE DECEMBER DURING THE RICE PADDY HARVEST COULD REDUCE THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF THIS YEAR'S PADDY OUTPUT IN BURMA. SHOWERS WERE FAIRLY WIDESPREAD IN THE DELTA REGION AND SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

2. THESE SHOWERS ARE EXPECTED TO ADVERSELY AFFECT THE EARLY MATURED CROP, MUCH OF WHICH HAD ALREADY BEEN HARVESTED AND WAS STILL IN OPEN, UNPROTECTED STORAGE WHEN THE RAINS FELL. HOWEVER, GUB AGRICULTURAL AUTHORITIES BELIEVE THE LATE MATURING CROP WAS LARGELY UNAFFECTED BY THE RAINS. LOSS DUE TO WET PADDY CAN BE REDUCED IF THE PADDY CAN BE COLLECTED, DRIED AND IMMEDIATELY UTILIZED FOR PROCESSING INTO PARBOILED RICE, BUT DEFICIENCIES IN BURMA'S COLLECTION AND TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MAY RENDER THIS IMPOSSIBLE.

3. DROUGHT OR NEAR DROUGHT CONDITIONS DURING THE GROWING SEASON HAD ALREADY REDUCED PROSPECTS FOR ANOTHER BUMPER PADDY CROP IN BURMA THIS YEAR. ALTHOUGH THE GUB MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE HAS NOT ALTERED ITS EARLIER ESTIMATE THAT PADDY OUTPUT IN BURMA FOR THE 1977/78 CROP YEAR WOULD

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REACY A RECORD 9,378,000 LONG TONS, SOME GUB AGRICULTURAL EXPERTS AND PRIVATE RICE MILLERS NOW BELIEVE THE TOTAL HARVEST COULD BE AS MUCH AS 15 TO 20 PERCENT BELOW THIS ESTIMATE. THEY ATTRIBUTE THE CAUSE OF THE EXPECTED SHORTFALL MORE TO THE DROUGHT CONDITIONS EARLIER IN THE SEASON THAN TO THE RECENT RAINS.

BARTLEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RICE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978RANGOO00020
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780008-0154
Format: TEL
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780196/aaaaddfu.tel
Line Count: 62
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 01cf8be6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3824260
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UNSEASONAL RAIN MAY REDUCE RICE PADDY HARVEST
TAGS: EAGR, BM
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/01cf8be6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014